

Letters to the Editor

Experience First

In his book *Central Intelligence and National Security* Harry Howe Ransom states that a director of CIA:

"... must be a rare combination of administrative expert, imaginative scholar, courageous master spy, and a person of keen sensitivity to the political ideals of the American Republic. America's master spy also must be a master judge and politician, but not a political partisan, and should be possessed of an inner integrity and common law sense."

Mr. Ransom's ideal director is no exaggerated concept. The post indeed should require the services of an elite talent whose selection is given a consideration comparable to a Chief Justice of the United States.

Since the departure of Allen Dulles, however, there has been a trend toward the appointment of directors who lack basic intelligence experience, notwithstanding their excellent administrative qualifications. Administrative ability cannot be overlooked, as Mr. Ransom points out. But it is believed that a first-hand knowledge of intelligence activities is an even greater asset, perhaps the primary criterion. Allen Dulles demonstrated his worth as an OSS leader in Europe during the Second World War. While the reservoir of former OSS men has been decimated by time, it is difficult to believe that none of the "old hands" can meet Mr. Ransom's demanding qualifications. If such a paucity of talent does in fact exist, then it bodes ill for the future of an intelligence service which cannot afford to be second best.

ROGER MOORE.
Arlington.